

CACFP Infant Meal Pattern Birth through 11 Months

To comply with the Child and Adult Care Food Program regulations, it is the responsibility of child care centers caring for infants to purchase all required meal components on the Infant Meal Pattern according to the different age groups in care. The Infant Meal Pattern lists the minimum amount of food to be offered to infants from birth through 11 months. The infant meal must contain each of the following components in at least the amounts indicated for the appropriate age group in order to qualify for reimbursement. Food within the meal pattern should be the texture and consistency appropriate for the development of the infant and may be served during a span of time consistent with the infant's eating habits; for example, the food items for lunch might be served at two feedings between 12 noon and 2 p.m. Solid food should be introduced gradually to infants when developmentally ready and instructed by the parent.

Items on the following meal chart with a “*” indicate the items are required and must be provided to the infant in order to claim reimbursement for that meal. Items listed under “When developmentally ready” are required only when the infant is developmentally ready to accept them.

Birth through 3 months	4 through 7 months	8 through 11 months
Breakfast		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4–6 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4–8 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} <p><u>When developmentally ready</u> 0–3 T infant cereal¹</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6–8 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} and 1–4 T fruit or vegetable or both and 2–4 T infant cereal¹
Lunch/Supper		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4–6 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4–8 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} <p><u>When developmentally ready</u> 0–3 T infant cereal¹ and 0–3 T fruit or vegetable or both</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6–8 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} and 1–4 T fruit or vegetable or both and 2–4 T infant cereal¹ or in place of infant cereal you may serve a meat/meat alternate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1–4 T meat, fish, poultry, egg yolk, cooked dry beans or peas; or ½–2 oz cheese; or 1–4 oz (volume) cottage cheese; or 1–4 oz (weight) cheese food, cheese spread or you may also serve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> both the infant cereal and meat/meat alternate
Snack		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4–6 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4–6 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2–4 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} or fruit juice⁴ <p><u>When developmentally ready</u> 0–½ slice crusty bread⁵ or 0–2 crackers⁵</p>

¹Infant formula and dry infant cereal must be iron-fortified.

²Breast milk or formula, or portions of both, may be served; however, it is recommended breast milk be served in place of formula from birth through 11 months.

³For some breastfed infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breast milk per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount of breast milk may be offered with additional breast milk offered if the infant is still hungry.

⁴Fruit juice must be full-strength.

⁵A serving of this component must be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour.

